

The Search for Life in the Universe

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Each recent report of liquid water existing elsewhere in the solar system has reverberated through the international press and excited the imagination of humankind. We have come to realize that where there is liquid water on Earth, virtually no matter what the physical conditions, there is life. Dr. Lynn Rothschild, an evolutionary biologist known for her work on life in extreme environments and a founder of the field of astrobiology, tells us about intriguing new data. The prevalence of potential abodes for life in our solar system and beyond, the survival of microbes in the space environment, modeling of the potential for transfer of life between celestial bodies, and advances in synthetic biology suggest that life could be more common than previously thought. Are we truly “alone”?